

U OF U HINCKLEY INSTITUTE OF POLITICS RECEIVES FUNDING FOR INTERNSHIPS ABROAD

Media Contacts

Aug. 17, 2006 -- With the receipt of a \$200,000 grant from Asian philanthropist Li Ka-shing, the University of Utah's Hinckley Institute of Politics will formalize an international internship program this fall. The grant will be used to further U students' training in international affairs and global business as well as foster greater understanding among peoples, foreign cultures and governments.

The gift from Li and the Li Ka-shing Foundation will be given over the next four years and supports University President Michael Young's emphasis on international outreach and interdisciplinary training and Hinckley Institute Director Kirk Jowers' vision of creating global internship opportunities on par with the national, state and local internships currently available.

The gift, to be matched by the Goudie Foundation and other organizations, will provide scholarship funds for 12 or more U students to serve Hinckley Institute political and public service internships abroad each year.

"To me, there is no more powerful education than that of experience," says Li, the Hong Kong-based businessman and philanthropist. "It is my hope that over the years, this program will provide scores of students at this great university with the opportunity to have wonderful learning experiences abroad, to exchange ideas and to build relationships that will benefit them throughout their lives."

Jowers notes that although the institute has offered a variety of occasional internships abroad for nearly a decade, the grant from Li will provide the University the opportunity to increase its focus in the international community, placing pods of four or five students to the capitals of Mexico, India, China and other countries. Students will receive credit hours, subsidized housing and financial assistance, which will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Courtney McBeth, Hinckley intern coordinator, will continue to help students select internships and guide them through the process of application and completion.

"We must prepare all of our students, regardless of discipline, to assume roles of leadership and responsibility throughout the world," says Young. "We are eager for our students to immerse themselves even more deeply in different cultures, languages and systems of governance; to become socially and politically literate and economically aware—all in an effort to further expand their view of the world. In acquiring multiple skills and further increasing their rich diversity of experience, students will be even more engaged and equipped to make the world a better place. The Hinckley Institute's Li Ka-shing Global Internship Program provides an

incredible platform to accomplish these goals.”

Jowers says the new program will draw upon a “natural demographic” of the brightest politically-minded and public service-oriented students who are knowledgeable of and interested in other countries and languages. “Combined with the Institute’s already-established and respected internship model and the fact that globalization is increasingly relevant to the future of the U’s students, Mr. Li’s generous support will allow students to gain a better understanding of the people, politics, policies and governments of the world. This experience will also make them more marketable as they leave college and better-trained to become future political and business leaders,” he says.

The Hinckley Institute has facilitated more than 4,000 local, state, national and international internships with political and governmental leaders and agencies, think tanks, major companies, non-profit and press organizations since 1965, the year it was founded and the internship program was initiated.

Last fall, Jonathan Lowell, 23, a senior U student studying political science, served an internship in Mexico City for Mexican senator Jeffrey Jones. He had already taken a Latin American Politics class at the U, so “the internship expanded on that,” he says.

Lowell, who was already fluent in Spanish, having lived in Latin America for nearly a decade, researched and learned much about the issues being addressed in the Mexican Senate at that time. “I also learned a lot about immigration because Jones was the president of the committee on border relations.” When he graduates Lowell would like to work in international affairs, specifically with Latin America. “I call myself ‘half Latin’ because I spent so much time there,” he says.

Last spring, Zan Larsen was the first University intern to be placed in Scotland. The 21-year-old intern, who served with the Scottish Parliament and Scottish Nationalist Party, earned 10 college credit hours for the experience. Another senior majoring in political science at the U, Larsen saw, first-hand, problems caused by the 1999 devolution of Scotland from England—in the media, in transportation and in the balance of powers in government. “I learned the importance of having multiple parties in government,” says Larsen, who, this summer, worked 10-hour days as a Hinckley Institute intern for the House International Relations Committee, in Washington, D.C.

“Now I am learning about our system of government and about the balance between all of the different players in the U.S.—between the parties, lobbying groups and congress,” Larsen says. She hopes to serve in the Peace Corps, then attend law school. “Hopefully I will be working back here on the hill. I’m not yet sure in what capacity.”

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